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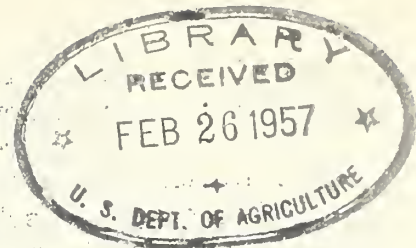


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TENTH ANNIVERSARY

of
THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM



Agricultural Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture

Washington, D. C.
June 1956

The National School Lunch Program will be ten years old on June 4, 1956. Here are the facts on the background, and the current position of the program:

WHEN IT BEGAN: On June 4, 1946, the National School Lunch Act became effective, establishing the National School Lunch Program...

"as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children, and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food"

The Act further provides for...

"assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of foods and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation and expansion of nonprofit school-lunch programs."

HOW IT HAS GROWN: Here, on its tenth birthday, is the record of what the program has accomplished in serving this dual purpose: first, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children; second, to encourage the consumption of agricultural commodities and other foods.

COVERAGE: The National School Lunch Program is now in operation in all of the 48 States, and in the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: The number of schools taking part in the program has grown to a total of 56,075 (the figure for November 1955, the peak month for the 1955-56 school year). The number of children taking part in each of these schools has increased by one-third to an average of 188 per school.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: The number of children participating in the National School Lunch Program has increased to 10,568,726.

NUMBER OF MEALS: More than 1-1/2 billion complete meals will be served under the program, for the current school year -- three times the total in the 1946-47 school year, first year of operation under the program.

AMOUNT OF FOOD USED: This many meals will use a total of over 2-1/2 billion pounds of food during the current school year.

VALUE OF FOOD USED: Schools taking part in the program will spend above \$350 million with local merchants for food this year, an increase of more than \$200 million over expenditures 10 years ago. In addition, the Federal government is contributing about \$100 million in commodities to the schools to make good constructive use of foods acquired by the Department under price-support and surplus-removal operations. Thus, the total value of foods used in the program this year will be over \$450 million.

BETTER LUNCHES: The National School Lunch Program imposes specific requirements on the nutritional value of lunches served by the schools, and the quality of the lunches has improved progressively. In the first year of its operation, 20 percent of the lunches did not include milk -- partly because some children did not like milk or were not accustomed to it, partly because many schools could not obtain a supply of fresh milk. This year, the number of meals served without milk will be reduced to 3 percent.

FEDERAL FUNDS: The National School Lunch Program is administered nationally by the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and operates this year on a Federal appropriation of \$83,236,197.

STATE AND LOCAL FUNDS: In the States, the program is administered by the State educational agencies; in turn, the lunch programs are conducted by the schools or, in some cases, other local groups. Expenditures by all sources within the States in support of the program now exceed \$450 million each year, a gain of 230 percent in the 10-year period. Expenditures for all program purposes rose from \$220 million to \$610 million last year. This year, the total is expected to approach \$700 million.

THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM -- A STATISTICAL SUMMARY

	<u>1946-47 School Year</u>	<u>1955-56 School Year*</u>
Number of schools participating.....	44,537	56,075
Number of children participating....	6,016,129	10,568,726
Number of children per school.....	139	188
Number of complete meals served.....	528,000,000	1.6 billion
Amount of food used, pounds.....	1.1 billion	2.5 billion
Value of food used.....	\$ 137,000,000	\$450,000,000
Federal appropriation.....	\$ 81,000,000	\$ 83,236,197
Apportioned to States, for food assistance.....	\$ 62,338,155	\$ 67,145,648
Foods provided for nutritive value, pounds.....	40,100,000	87,500,000
Foods donated, pounds.....	111,200,000	248,000,000
Expenditures from all sources in States.....	\$150,688,000	\$495,000,000
Cash food expenditures, through local merchants.....	\$129,000,000	\$350,000,000
Expenditures for all purposes.....	\$221,000,000	\$700,000,000

*Preliminary

FURTHER INFORMATION: about operation of the program is included in publication PA-19, The National School Lunch Program.

